

operate a Montana Pole water treatment plant and in-situ treatment facilities for decades at this site.

Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area NPL Site

The Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area NPL Site is divided into two portions for administrative purposes - the Butte portion and the original portion. The Butte Priority Soils OU (as described extensively in this ROD) is one of four remedial OUs within Butte portion (Figure 4-1). The other three OUs in the Butte portion include:

Butte Mine Flooding OU. This area consists of flooding of the Berkeley Pit and hydraulically connected underground mine workings and associated bedrock and alluvial aquifers in response to the cessation of dewatering practices. It also addresses the bedrock groundwater system under a large portion of the Butte Priority Soils OU.

EPA completed a ROD for this OU in 1994. A state-of-the-art treatment plant was recently completed to treat inflow from the active mine area. This treated water is currently being used by the active mining operations. Berkeley Pit water will be treated at this treatment plant when rising water levels in the Berkeley Pit reach the determined critical water level. Treated water will be discharged to Silver Bow Creek or reused within the active mine.

West Side Soils OU. This OU encompasses areas of Silver Bow County that have experienced mining activity but lie outside of other OUs. This is generally north and west of the Butte Hill. EPA has conducted initial scoping activities for this OU.

Active Mining and Milling OU. This area is located east and northeast of the Butte Priority Soils OU and consists of the permitted mine area currently operated by Montana Resources. In 2002, EPA deferred Superfund action at the site to state authority under the operating hard rock mining permit.

The original portion of the Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area NPL site includes four remedial OUs:

Streamside Tailings OU. The Streamside Tailings OU covers an area along Silver Bow Creek and its associated floodplain, and runs from the western end of the Butte Priority Soils OU to the point where Silver Bow Creek enters the Warm Springs Ponds. The OU extends for approximately 25 creek miles between Butte and Warm Springs.

The OU focuses on the fluvially deposited tailings along Silver Bow Creek and the adjacent railroad beds that are contaminated with mine waste. DEQ and EPA completed a ROD for this OU in 1995.

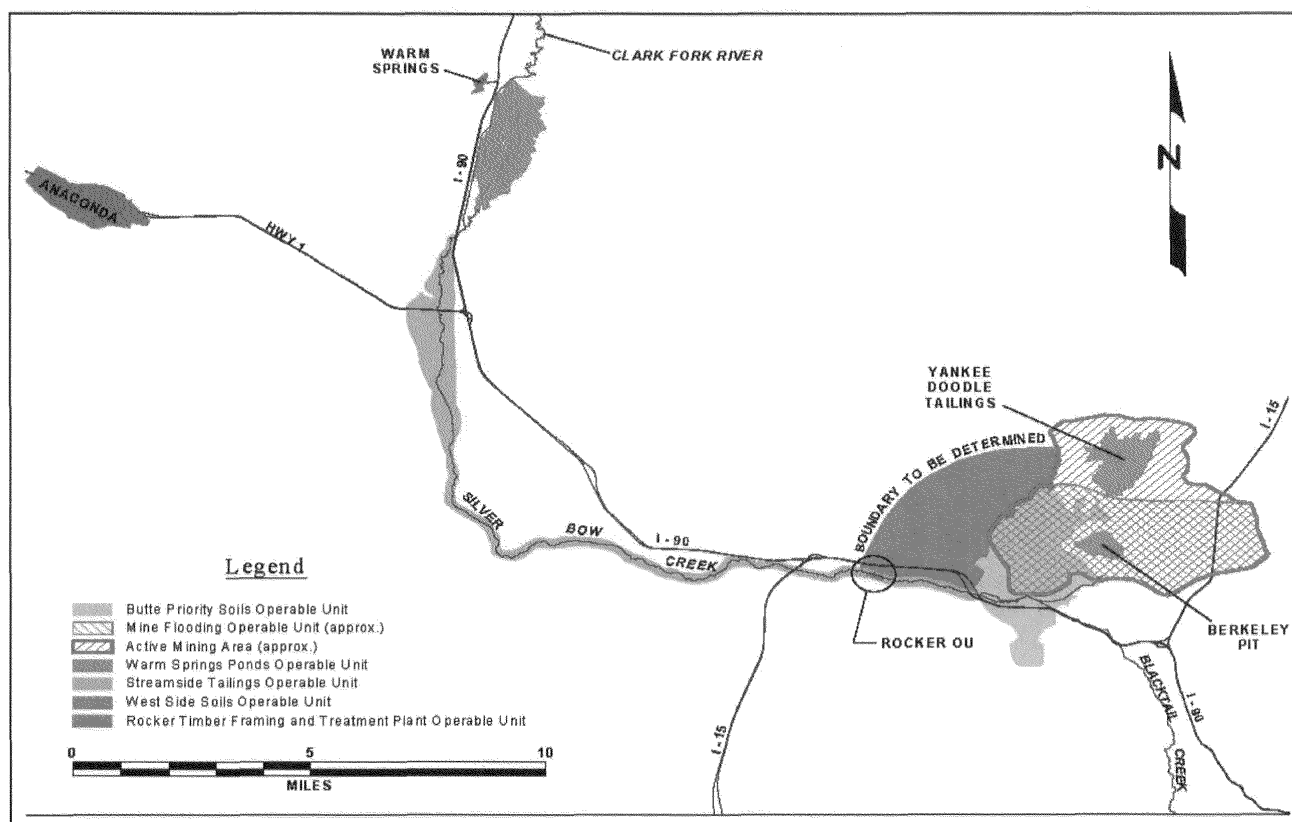


Figure 4-1
Operable Units within the Silver Bow Creek/
Butte Area NPL Site (approximate boundaries)
Record of Decision
Butte Priority Soils Operable Unit
Silver Bow Creek/Butte Area NPL Site

